

4 May 1977

Discussion of the Draft Report of the Senate Select Committee  
on NIEs on the Soviet Strategic Forces and the "B" Team Episode

1. The agenda for the discussion might be as follows:
  - How should the estimates on the Soviet Union be organized?
  - Specifically, what should be the content of 11-3/8 on strategic forces?
  - Should there be an estimate on Soviet purposes and strategy to provide a general framework?
  - What should the Soviet forces estimate include by way of analysis and Soviet military doctrine, etc.?
2. The "B" team exercise raises the question of whether estimates should be reviewed by outside experts? If so, which kinds of estimates? What would be the best procedure: at what stage, what should the experts be asked to do?
3. Should there be more net assessments and, if so, how should they be done?

Attachment to  
SP - 93/76

Background Concerning the Proposal of the PFIAB for an "Experiment" in  
Competitive Analysis

-- The PFIAB first raised the "experiment" in an 8 August 1975 letter to the President in which it stated that NIE 11-3/8-74 (Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Conflict Through 1985) "is seriously misleading in the presentation of a number of key judgments and in projecting a sense of complacency unsupported by the facts; as a consequence it is deficient for the purpose it should serve." The NSC Staff asked Mr. Colby to provide the President with comments on the PFIAB-proposed experiment. In his reply to the President on 21 November 1975, Mr. Colby suggested that the forthcoming 1975 NIE on Soviet strategic forces be reviewed by the PFIAB to ascertain the extent to which it overcame deficiencies perceived in the 1974 NIE as a basis for determining if the PFIAB experiment should be pursued.

-- A 1 April 1976 report of the PFIAB's ad hoc NIE Evaluation Committee (Chairman: Robert W. Galvin, Members: Edward Teller and John S. Foster) concludes that the PFIAB's proposal of August 1975 to create an experimental competitive analysis group be pursued. The Evaluation Committee also concluded that a National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) to implement this proposal be considered. The Committee reached its conclusions after (a) comparing the 1974 and 1975 NIEs, (b) reviewing a ten-year "track record" of NIE judgments about Soviet strategic forces, and (c) conducting a survey of some 40 "authorities" in and out of the government.

-- Mr. Carver met with Mr. Galvin in Chicago on 12 May to discuss the method by which the experiment should be conducted. Its details are contained in a draft letter from Mr. Galvin to the DCI which was prepared by Mr. Carver and the NIO/Strategic Programs. The DCI approved its transmittal to Mr. Galvin on 26 May. No NSDM is envisioned as part of the processes outlined for the experiment; the NIO/SP presently is working on its implementation.

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